

## Case 2964

### S.D. Kaicher (1973–1992), *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells*: proposed suppression for nomenclatural purposes

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**Abstract.** Between 1973 and 1992 S.D. Kaicher issued 60 card-packs of marine prosobranch gastropods in a *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells*. These card-packs, with over 6,200 cards, were intended as a guide for shell collectors to identify their specimens. Many of the cards have statements concerning the status of type specimens, some erroneous but others constituting valid lectotype designations. It is proposed that the Card Catalogue be suppressed for nomenclatural purposes, leaving it as originally intended as a valuable guide for shell collectors but without nomenclatural status.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; S.D. Kaicher; *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells* (1973–1992); Mollusca; prosobranch gastropods.

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1. Mrs Sally Diana Kaicher of St. Petersburg (Florida) issued a series of sixty card-packs titled *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells* comprising printed photographs with captions of various species of mollusks. The first card-pack, titled 'Marginellidae' was issued in 1973 and contained 98 cards, each card individually numbered and having a photograph of a representative species, together with a caption containing, inter alia, the scientific name, geographic range, a brief diagnosis and the source of the specimen(s) illustrated. Each card-pack also included a 'title' or cover card including the name of the family and date of issuance, an 'acknowledgement' card thanking the individuals and museums whose shells were figured, and a larger sized 'errata' sheet containing corrections to previous card-packs together with an order form for the next card-pack. The date of the individual cards can only be determined with reference to the cover card for the pack containing that card.

2. These card-packs, covering various families, were issued for the next two decades, with about 100 cards per pack. The sixtieth and last such pack, on the family MARGINELLIDAE like the first, was issued on 14 May 1992 and brought the numbering of the series to 6215. In other words, over 6,200 of these index-card sized cards were issued. Despite their broadly inclusive title, these card-packs were restricted to marine prosobranch gastropods: nonmarine prosobranchs, opisthobranchs, pulmonates and the other mollusk classes were not treated.

3. The purpose of these card-packs was to help amateur shell collectors with the identification and generic classification of their personal shell collections. They were available by purchase from Kaicher's private address. Although sets of this work are present in the Mollusk libraries of several natural history museums, none has been

formally catalogued (i.e., with library call numbers) nor has this series been cited in *Zoological Record* or other abstracting sources.

4. Many of these cards were based on photographs of specimens in various private collections, as noted in the acknowledgement card for each pack. Others were based on specimens in certain natural history museums in the United States, Europe and Australia. For these museum specimens, Kaicher often gave the museum catalogue number, but sometimes gave only the museum acronym ('MCZ', 'USNM', etc.). She took pride in the fact that a number of 'type specimens' were included, as that appeared to enhance the value of her card-packs for identification purposes.

5. Unfortunately, Kaicher does not appear to have researched the literature or status of the supposed type specimens which she illustrated. This omission resulted in a number of mistakes on her part and has raised a most problematic issue concerning these card-packs as publications.

6. First, do these card-packs meet the criteria for publication (Articles 7-9 of the Code)? Yes, they were printed, widely distributed, readily obtainable, produced in large quantities, and do not contain a formal nomenclatural disclaimer. There is no specific indication that the card-packs were issued 'for the purpose of providing a permanent scientific record' (cf. Article 8a). This criterion is subjective in that, while some researchers would not consider a work such as her card-packs to be part of the permanent scientific record, others would do so.

7. Second, what are the impacts of her statements concerning the type status of the various museum specimens illustrated? Four examples have been chosen to illustrate the problems inherent in these card-packs. It must be noted that Article 74b specifies that if any author calls a specimen a 'holotype' (or even 'the type') when it is actually part of a syntype series, then that author has actually made a lectotype selection.

- (1) In Card-pack 31 (NASSARIIDAE I, issued 2 April 1982), card no. 3207 of *Nassarius scissuratus* (Dall) has 'specimen illustrated is the holotype (USNM)...'. There are actually five syntype lots of this species (two in the U.S. National Museum and three in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard) and it cannot be determined which of the two USNM lots (containing 3 and 6 specimens respectively) includes the specimen figured by Kaicher.
- (2) In Card-pack 48 (BUCCINIDAE III, issued 10 May 1987), card no. 4910 figured a specimen of *Ptychosalpinx globulus* (Dall) which was stated to be 'MCZ — holotype'. This species was described in 1889, based upon two syntype specimens (USNM 86984). Kaicher's figured specimen, MCZ 135260, is not from the type series or even type locality, having been collected in the twentieth century, and has no type status whatsoever. Other cards have similar errors in attributing type status to a specimen where none such exists (cf. Article 74a(v)).
- (3) In Card-pack 19 (CANCELARIIDAE, issued 6 December 1978), card no. 1940 of *Admete microscopica* (Dall) has 'specimen illustrated is the holotype (USNM 32977)'. In fact, this species is based upon three syntype lots, USNM 82977, USNM 94297 and USNM 107987. Presumably '32977' was an error for '82977'. A number of other type lots illustrated by Kaicher have similar errors in the catalogue numbers, or lack an indication of which syntype in a lot containing several specimens was that illustrated.
- (4) In Card-pack 27 (TEREBRIDAE II, issued 1981), card no. 2710 of *Terebra acrior* Dall has 'specimen illustrated is the holotype (USNM 87294)...'. This number

actually refers to a syntype lot (there are two other syntype lots, one each in MCZ and USNM), and here we have what would be a valid lectotype selection by Kaicher, if her work is accepted as a publication for taxonomic purposes.

8. In conclusion, (a) the availability of Kaicher's privately printed card-packs as a publication for nomenclatural purposes is ambiguous, and (b) numerous statements concerning the status of type specimens were made by Kaicher, many in error but others potentially representing valid lectotype designations. Over 6,200 cards have been issued and the curatorial staff of a number of museums would have to check each of these cards to find specific mentions of 'type' specimens from their collections and then determine whether or not her statements were correct (including those that are really lectotype designations) or were in error. Searching and verifying these inadvertent lectotype designations would impose an onerous burden upon curators and professional malacologists conducting taxonomic research on marine prosobranch gastropods.

9. Therefore, I propose that the Commission should suppress Kaicher's *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells* for nomenclatural purposes. It was obviously not her intention nor desire to undertake any manner of systematic revision with implications for the status of the type material of the species illustrated. The numerous errors show that such research was not performed in the course of the preparation of these cards. Suppression of her work for nomenclatural purposes would have no effect on their utility for shell collectors which, after all, was the purpose of her card-packs. Instead, it would avoid any problems concerning the type status of the specimens illustrated. In particular, the inadvertent lectotype designations will be completely obviated, as it is clear that she had no intention of making lectotype selections in her card-packs.

10. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress for nomenclatural purposes the work by S.D. Kaicher (1973–1992) entitled *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells*;
- (2) to place the above work on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Works in Zoological Nomenclature.

#### Acknowledgements

I thank R.E. Petit for bringing this problem to my attention. F.M. Bayer and C.W. Sabrosky provided helpful discussion on the manuscript.

#### Reference

Kaicher, S.D. 1973–1992. *Card Catalogue of World-Wide Shells*. Pack 1 (cards 1–99) through Pack 60 (cards 6110–6215). Privately published, St. Petersburg, Florida.